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Swedish Coinage,
Reflector of History

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I. INTRODUCTION

One might describe Sweden in a few words as an old, but highly-developed social-democratic nation basking in the glories of a powerful military past.

This paper will touch on some aspects of Swedish coinage as a reflector of the culture or history of Sweden contemporary with the period of issue of the coin. Certain of these reflections are quite well publicized in numismatic literature; others, more obscure, while a few are but observations and thoughts of the author.

II. HISTORY OF THE NORTHLAND

A sketch of Scandinavian history is helpful before considering the numismatics of this region.

The Goths and Svear were the original people of Sweden. The Goths migrated southward into northern Europe, and the Svear, eastward across the Baltic, settling Finland, and moving southeastward to the Black Sea. The southern and central regions of Sweden are named Gotaland and Svealand after these early inhabitants. Gradually intermarrying, they were permanently jointed by King Sverker (1134-55), each tribe alternating in supplying a common king for the next century. The name Sverige (Sweden) derives from the Svear (Anglo-Saxon Sweon).

Scandinavian history is plentiful in attempts at unifying the peoples of the north politically and/or economically, starting with King Sverker, as mentioned. Norway was conquered by the Canute, King of the Danes in 1028, but was not firmly bound to Denmark until 1380, under Queen Margaret. She was elected Queen of Sweden in 1388 and proposed the Union of Kalmar in 1397 which provided for the common defense of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Although it was never ratified by all three nations Sweden remained under

the Danish flag until 1523, and Norway until 1814. After Margaret's death frequent battling between the succeeding Danish rulers and the Swedes occurred, culminating in the "Bloodbath of Stockholm", in 1520. Denmark's Christian II gave a state dinner for eighty of Sweden's noblemen, had them arrested, brought before a Kangaroo Court, convicted and executed. Gustaf Vasa, son of one of the slain nobles, aroused and led the Swedes to drive out the Danes in 1523. As King Gustaf I Vasa/^{he}joined in the Reformation movement and reformed and consolidated Sweden in many fields. Gustaf II Adolph, Sweden's first of the great Warrior Kings placed much European territory under the Swedish flag, and saved the Protestant movement in brilliant victories in the Thirty Years War at Breitenfeld and Luetzen in Germany. Under Queen Kristina Sweden's only attempt at colonizing in America was made, in 1636, with the Delaware Colony lost to the Dutch in 1654. Sweden's expansion was abruptly halted in the Great Northern War by a disastrous defeat of Charles XII by Russia's Peter the Great at Poltava, in 1709. Most of Sweden's provinces in Northern Germany and along the eastern shores of the Baltic were lost. In the Napoleonic Wars Sweden fought Denmark and Russia, losing Finland to Russia in 1808. Following England's naval engagements with Denmark, Norway was blockaded, and a ruling commission was set up, headed by Sweden's Prince Christian Augustus subsequently named heir apparent to the Swedish throne. Christian August declined the connection with Norway and Jean Baptiste Jules de Bernadotte, a field marshal of Napoleon Bonaparte accepted the call as regent to the Swedish throne. Bernadotte seized Norway rather than attempting a recovery of Finland from Russia. Denmark's Frederick VI at the Treaty of Kiel on January 14, 1814 renounced his sovereignty over Norway in favor of the Swedish crown under Charles XIII.

The Norwegians repudiating^{ed} the Treaty of Kiel, claiming it disposed of an entire nation without its consent and claiming the right to determine its own sovereignty, the Norwegians adopted a national constitution on May 17, 1814. Their previous Danish viceroy Christian Frederick was elected king.

Sweden's subsequent invasion of Norway has been passed down in the ditty "Ten Thousand Swedes ran through the weeds chasing one Norwegian". After two weeks of skirmishing it was negotiated that Norway would retain its independence and constitution and be subject to a merely personal union under Sweden.

Bernadotte became King of Sweden and Norway as Charles XIV John in 1818, reigning until 1844. The early years of the union were bitter ones, with Swedish opinion generally continuing to regard Norway as a conquered country with the Treaty of Kiel as the title. The highly nationalistic Norwegians were outraged by this sentiment. Time did little to change the feelings, as shown in the results of a plebiscite of August 28, 1905; 368,211 for severance from Sweden and only 184 against it. On October 27, 1905 King Oscar II relinquished the Crown of Norway, and on November 25th Prince Carl of Denmark became Haakon VII, King of Norway, establishing Norwegian independence after 525 years of foreign rule.

Now let's examine some of the numismatic highlights of this great Northland nation.

III. VIKING AGE COINAGE

The development of coinage in Sweden was late in starting, since a barter system served the simple pagan economy in the early centuries after the birth of Christ. Although Roman coins have been unearthed in Sweden it is thought that because of their very limited number their use was not common. With the coming of the Viking age (circa 800-1100 A.D.), however, deep penetrations southeastward to the Black Sea were made by the Svear and the Goths, peoples of the area of present central and southern Sweden. The name "Sweden" derives from the Anglo-Saxon "Sweon" given to these people.

Trade on a large scale was established between the Viking and Mohammedan worlds, with much payment for northern furs being taken in Arabian silver or Qufic dirhems. These were ^{minted} ~~printed~~ in the city of Al-Cufa within the area of the present country of Iraq. Huge hoards of the silver dirhems in Sweden attest to the extent of Viking trade with the wealthy Abbasids and Samanids. About 100,000 dirhems have been found in Sweden alone. Viking penetrations deep into France in the ninth century channeled Emperor Charlemagne's Dorestad coinage northwards, with the earliest Scandanavian moneyers making poor quality copies. Positive location of minting is known but Birka, in Sweden is thought to be a probable mint site. After the destruction about 830 A.D. of Dorestad, the Northmen attempted copies of the well-known coinage but failed miserably, their legends suffering from Viking ignorance of the language being copied. A completely new style coinage resulted, with human masks, ships, reindeer, etc. as the motifs, with inscriptions limited to symbols, in general.

Sweden's first authorized coinage was struck in the year 995 when her first Christian monarch, Olaf Skötkonung brought moneyers from England to Sigtuna, near present Stockholm to strike silver coins. These were imitations of the silver penny of the Anglo-Saxon King Ethelred II. These early Swedish issues are extremely rare, the largest part of silver having been that of other lands. At the death of Skötkonung's successor, King Ölund Jacob about 1050, minting in Sweden was discontinued for more than a century. This numismatic limbo is attributed to the powerful heathen reaction to the introduction of Christianity, and the lack of aggressiveness of the Faith for many decades.

These ventures in domestic coinage by Viking Age Swedes clearly reflect the culture and economy of the land. The first attempt by these quasi-Christian peoples to produce a sound medium of exchange was noble, but ineffective in joining the main stream of the civilized world. Arabian, Germanic and Anglo-Saxon prices served the needs of the Vikings better than anything they could coin themselves.

IV. EVOLUTION OF THE MONETARY SYSTEM

Swedish coinage actually came into its own during the twelfth century. Small, thin two sided pieces unattributed to ruler or mint were issued from about 1150 to 1270, with the island of Gotland thought to be their source. The second and by far most plentiful type were thin one-sided coins, or bracteates. These silver, pennig pieces originated with one Knut Erikson (1167-1196). The star, wheel, lion, sword and royal bust were found among the great variety of designs appearing over the next three centuries. These pennigs were the smallest unit of a weight system in widespread use based

upon the mark weight of about 210 grams. This divided as 1 mark-8 aurar-
24 ertogar-240 pennigar, with these divisions developed at different times.
The thin bracteate pennigs weighed about 0.9 gram, hardly more than a
silver version of the heavy foil seal found on the head of a champagne cork.

As the affluence of society grew with the Middle Ages the pennig de-
preciated as a result of weight reduction, with the difference between the
mark (weight) and mark (pennig), or money of account gradually increasing.
These were originally equal, but varied from one region to another, gradually
deviating to 1:20 by the late Middle Ages. That is, the true weight penny
of about 1 gram had depreciated in intrinsic silver worth to a mere 5% of
original silver content.

To rejuvenate the monetary system a new denomination, the "örtug of 1.3
grams was introduced during the reign of Albrekt of Mecklenburg (1364-1389).
Half-örtugs or "fyrks" were struck from 1470 to 1500 in the reign of Sten
Sture the Elder, with the first dated coin appearing in 1478. In 1522, the
öre was born, a denomination still in use. The first öre issue was struck
in 400-fine silver, as today, and weighed 4 grams.

It was not until 1573 that silver debasement progressed to the change
from billon to that last step prior to elimination of silver, silver dipping
or plating of a copper struck coin. The 2 öre pieces of John III were so
produced in 1573 and 1591. The first authorized coins of pure copper appeared
in 1624 under Gustavus II Adolphus, creating a new base metal coinage and a
new market for the huge copper reserves at Falun.

Sweden's breach with Denmark in 1523 under the leadership of the great
Gustav Vasa signalled her beginning as an international power. In 1534 the
rigsdaler, a generally accepted medium of international exchange was intro-
duced. Its fine weight of 25 grams of silver was zealously protected down

through the centuries, unchanged until establishment of the Krone as the monetary unit under the Scandinavian monetary convention of 1872.

The transition of Swedish economy from a Viking raider to an established kingdom status is vividly reflected in her coinage of that time span. The erosion of full mark weight value of early coins through the years gave rise to frequent revaluation of coinage, with new monetary units facilitating this debasement. Reconstitution of monetary scales continued through the years as direct reflectors of Sweden's history and economy.

V. MONEY OF NECESSITY

Sweden's economy suffered a slump along with her military defeat at Poltava and subsequent unsuccessful attempts at military victory in Poland and Russia. She emerged virtually bankrupt, military drains for the Great Northern War having almost emptied the coffers. Attempts to alleviate the situation included a recall of silver in 1709 and the issue in 1718 of a series of token copper dalers of novel motif. The obverses depicted figures of ancient dieties or national figures, suitably identified with latin titles, with reverses carrying the value within a wreath or circular design. This series was the inspiration of the Minister of Finance, Baron ^{De}Van Goertz. Large scale refusal of acceptance of these copper dalers followed, with the result that Charles XII had the Baron beheaded for his folly!

VI. SYMBOLS AND INSCRIPTIONS

The three crowns of Sweden in a two over one pattern is a frequent device on Swedish coins, dating from Viking Age issues. The number three from earliest times has been the mystic symbol of the rulership of three worlds: spiritual, psychial and physical. The three crowns in the arms of Sweden

typify the Magi, the Saints Balthassar, Caspar and Melchior. The three crowns are sometimes displayed on a globe encircled by the chain of the order of the Seraphim.

The Swedish lion appears often, rampant left, or as single or forked tail supporters of the royal shield, or within the field of the shield itself.

The arms of the province containing the mint of issue appeared on coppers frequently from 1624, the first year of issue, through 1855. Copper "creutzers" (Kreutzers) struck at Nyköping for use in Germany during the Thirty Years War carried on the full reverse the griffin rampant of the province of Södermanland. To establish identity these then-novel coppers were inscribed.....MONETA. NOVA. CVPREA. NICOPENS (New copper money of Nyköping). The mint at Arboga used the spread eagle arms of that city, with a similar inscription ending in ARBOGENS (of Arboga).

On many issues the crossed arrows and crown of the Province of Dalarna are used for the full obverse, while on the bank money of account "banco" coins of 1835-1855 the arrows have shrunk in size. Early arrowed coins of Dalarna (1624-32) were struck at Säter, close to the Stora Kopparberget (Big Copper Mountain) copper mines at Falun, and later, at Avesta and Stockholm.

Mottos of the king were frequently used in field lettering of the coins. Some examples are: Charles XIV John (1818-1844) FOLKETS KÄRLEK MIN BELÖNING (The Peoples Love is My Reward); Oscar I (1844-59) RÄTT OCH SANNING (Right and Truth); Charles XV (1859-1872) LAND SKALL MED LAG BYGGAS (The Country Must be Built on the Law).

VII. NORWAY FOREVER

After the passing of the Norwegian crown to Sweden in 1814 Norway's coinage reflected that highly nationalistic spirit of these people previously mentioned. The Norwegian crossed hammers or lion rampant with battle axe remained intact. The bust of the Swedish King and his motto (in Norwegian, of course) were the sole allowances made. The King's title was reversed from that on Swedish pieces, such that "Norway" appeared first, with "Sweden" abbreviated. As an aid to identifying the new Krone and divisionary øre system with the superseded daler/skilling units after the Scandinavian monetary conference of 1872 the Norwegian silver issues carried both values on a 10:3 ratio. For example, a 50 øre piece is also identified as 15 skillings. This answer to the confusion of a new coinage scale shows the resourcefulness of that nation. The change in motto on Sweden's coinage from BRÖDRAFÖLJANS VÄL (Welfare of the Brotherhood) to SVERIGENS VÄL (Welfare of Sweden) after 1906 reflects Sweden's reduction in concern with the loss of her cantankerous charge.

VIII. EPILOGUE

These few aspects of Sweden's coinage were chosen for their history-reflecting qualities. Viking Age issues were few and regressive, needing the entrenchment of Christianity to give impetus to development of a monetary system. The gradual debasement occurring with the growing nation was accepted when kept within bounds, but rejected when carried to the extent of token copper for the highly respected Swedish rigsdaler. Norwegian coinage under Sweden reflects the independent spirit of a people chaffing under an unpopular crown. The bloodless release of the crown of Norway was motivated, perhaps, by the heavy conscience of a modern brother-people. Swedish numismatics has indeed reflected Northland history.

"COINAGE OF GEORGE III OF GREAT BRITAIN"

A Paper Presented to the
Western Pennsylvania Numismatic
Society, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania,
April 5, 1966 by:

GLENN E. OTTERMAN, SR.

You will note the sketch of a 1791 'spade' guinea. You will also see this sketch in the future anytime I present a paper on the "Coinage of King George III of Great Britain". Not that I need any reminder of its significance--but--rather to make you mindful of this being the coin that started me on a long, seemingly endless road of interesting research.

A different title, namely, "Four Faces of George" will be discussed at a much later date; so, though you didn't realize it at first---I can now--- (safely or not)---let you know of this just being the start. More talks are to come ---also at a later date; I shall relate some of the trials, tribulations, joys, frustrations, and what have you, pertaining to my involvements in this project.

I realize some of you gentlemen are quite knowledgeable of the life of George III. There may be some who only know of him as being the 'King of England' during the American Revolutionary War. To put us all at ease, and before starting on the coinage of this

monarch, I feel we should have a slight biographical base.

George III (George William Frederick), king of Great Britain and Ireland, was born June 4, 1738, in London, England; the eldest son of Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, and Augusta, daughter of Duke Frederick II of Saxe-Gotha. He succeeded to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland, and to the electorate of Hanover on October 25, 1760 upon the death of his grandfather, George II. Young George, whose father had died in 1751, was then in line for this succession.

He was reared in a home life of constant bickering and unleashed quarrelling. His education ^{was} ~~were~~ political issues. His tutors were well intentioned-but-not completely qualified men. His devoted, overly protective mother, who was foolish in her misunderstandings about education, was a deterrent in his preparation for the 'kingship'---except for her constantly telling him, "George, be a king". His guide line for administration was Bolingbroke's, "Patriot King"

Here was a young man of twenty-two and a half years of

Page Three

age who had not been fully prepared for the leadership in its entirety. He was determined to restore the 'royal prerogative' to the throne. There were times of political mismanagement. He inherited one war (The Seven Years' War of which the French and Indian Wars in America were a part) that did gain Canada and Florida for England in 1763. The American Revolutionary War being the outcome of certain oppressive political and financial policies toward the colonies, resulted in England losing these colonies. Another war started in 1793 between England and the revolutionary government of France which ended with the downfall of Napoleon. He was be-deviled by the opposition of his sons, their extravagances and dissolute habits. George III was a man who was more interested in the sciences than the arts, and a man who, though quite vain in certain respects, was nicknamed "Farmer George" because of his interest in agriculture. Should there ever be any misgivings about his times of insanity and eventual complete insanity?

*though he established the
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Academy
of Arts,*

In October, 1788, King George III had a severe attack

Page Four

of insanity, but recovered in March, 1789. A very bitter political struggle ensued at this time over the regency.

Pitt (the younger) was minister and Pitt supported George III. The rightful regent, the Prince of Wales, later George IV, who was at continuous odds with his father, supported Pitt's opposition. George III was not only plagued by other occurrences of madness in 1801, 1804 and 1810; *but also, blindness in 1808.* George III was spared a fourth war (The War of 1812) because of his permanent insanity which started in 1811. His death on January 29, 1820 was the end of a reign of 59 years, 3 months and 4 days.

"THE COINAGE OF KING GEORGE III"

The title, in its simplest implications, covers forty-nine (49) issues of coins. Do not be fooled into thinking that this is all there is to the story. I am certain someone, somewhere, or even many persons from many places, can or will refute the number of issues.

One certainty, numismatically speaking, the reign of this monarch brought about probably more changes of faces (portraits); also of designs than any other reign. Another certainty, the long reign of George III was very distinguishing numismatically in that this period of time marked the end of the old type of copper coinage. The arts, during a transitional period, usually suffer in one phase or another, but conversely gain in other phases. The transition was not completed until the following reign. Rather poor design is evident in the latter copper coins, the spade guinea and the 1787 silver issues. Workmanship, mechanical and size regularities were the gains.

Some interesting sidelights pertaining to English coinage prior to the reign of George III are as follows:

There had been debasements of coinage.

In 1649 an order had been given for the inscriptions on the coinage

to be in the English tongue.

The farthing as a round coin was first made in the thirteenth (13th) century.

"Maundy Money" as a term is applicable during and after the reign of George II.

Coin shortages have been a part of our rather recent news. Lo, and behold! England during George III's reign had coin shortages. Wars create needs for more monies. Population movement during the latter half of the eighteenth (18th) century from the countryside to the cities created a greater need for more coinage. High cost of copper and a near exhausted supply of silver made the minting of coins nearly impossible. (If a particular era was not known as in this case, wouldn't you almost think I was talking about our own recent coin shambles!) Movement of gold overseas was very risky, because of the Napoleonic War; thus, in 1799 the Royal Mint stopped issuing the gold coinage known as guineas. Consider the screw press which was manually operated, and capable of only twenty (20) or so coins a minute production. When I take all of the factors into account, it seems very remarkable that any coins of this reign are available.

During my investigating information for this, "The Coinage of King George III"-----I was astounded by the items of numismatic interest other than the coinage itself. Just to mention a few things which come to mind are:

counterfeiting

private token coinages

store cards

medallions

Medals of Lord Nelson

Colonial Coinages

Hanoverian Thalers

Ireland

Isle of Man

India (Ceylon)

British Guinea

Bermuda

counterstamps

comparable numismatics

There are so many interesting side issues of numismatic importance pertaining to this reign that I almost feel the title to be in error. The 'trade tokens'---'provincial coins'---were mostly

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of copper and in the denomination of farthings and half pennies; however, there were some ~~struck~~ ^{token coinage} in silver and gold. These 'tokens or coins' did not bear the portraiture of His Majesty George III. Tradesmen, merchants, manufacturers, mechanics generally had their own portraits on the 'trade tokens'. Events of historical value were usually on the 'provincial coins'. Though these issues were not legal coinage the government gave an unofficial approving nod to their usage. After all, remember, there was a coin shortage!

More important that I should bring this up at this time is another matter. From approximately 1787 to 1796 there was a 'national pastime' of collecting of tokens. The height of the frenzy was reached toward the end of 1794. Some of the scarce issues doubled, tripled or even became higher priced. Does this have a familiar ring to it? The important part of this collecting frenzy is the preservation of some of the colonial tokens and early issues of United States coinage. These being some of items, which some of these frenzied collectors turned to in collecting 'after the storm'.

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Some of the names and things which 'crop-up' in this jaunt through the "Coinage of King George III" are almost staggering and truly amazing. After a look over these names and things, then, we can see how like the 'jigsaw puzzle' they all have a definite place in the evolution of the times. Names? Oh yes, James Watt, Robert Fulton, Stephenson, James Hargreaves--- yes--that 'apple guy' Newton. Things! Well, there's coal, iron, blast furnace, spinning jenny, steam engine---yes-- the Industrial Revolution.

To endeavor to cover the previously mentioned forty-nine (49) issues and/or the many other types or kinds of pieces struck during this reign would be an impossibility for any one sitting. We should, however, see a sufficient number of coins, tokens, etc., to have a bit of an idea of what I have been trying to put across.

FIRST: What else--the 1791 'spade' guinea.

- The 'spade' guinea was struck from 1787-1799.

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It was the fifth (5th) issue of the guinea series. Previously I had mentioned it to be of 'rather poor design'. Further study on my part will be required before I can ever truly be able to fully agree or disagree. After all! Shouldn't I be partial? Lewis Pingo had this coin all to himself. By that I mean, he was both the designer and engraver of both the obverse and reverse.

SECOND: -A 1788 one-half (1/2) 'spade' guinea. These were struck from 1787 to 1800- same designer and engraver.

Both of the foregoing were not struck during all of the years mentioned inclusively---but---most of them. The guinea became a part of English coinage during the reign of Charles II, and ended with the reign of George III. The guinea was replaced by the pound gold piece (sovereign). The guinea was a gold coin, 21 shillings in value.

THIRD: - A 1779 guinea, the fourth (4th) issue of the guinea series which were struck from 1774 to 1786; except, 1781. Thomas Pingo designed the obverse, engraved the ob-

verse and reverse. Tanner designed the reverse.

FOURTH:

- A store card- copy of a 'spade' guinea - brass-
obverse George III--reverse: Parkins and Gotto-
London. When I ran across this one--I did a
flip.

FIFTH

-1774 Farthing-copper- first issue of the farthing
series which were struck from 1771 thru 1775.

I have read of Tanner and of Thomas Pingo being
the designers and/or engravers of this coin.

Please, I'm not ready for this controversy!!!!

SIXTH:

-1778 Half Penny-copper-Forgery. Something
other than official coinage of Great Britain;
afterall, no half pennies were struck from 1776
until 1797.

SEVENTH:

-1792 - Half Penny - Trade Token-obverse
John Wilkinson-Iron Master reverse Vulcan.

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EIGHTH:

¹⁷⁹⁹
~~1792~~ Farthing-copper--We are back on genuine
coinage again! Note here of the date being
under the bust of His Majesty; also, this was
the first English coin to have the denomination
(value) as a part of the lettering. This is the
third issue of the farthing series. C. Kuchler
(mitt der dots above the 'u') designed and en-
graved both sides of the coin. This is one of the
coins which fall under the 'rather poor design'
statement and again, I am not about to
agree or disagree at this time.

NINTH:

^{copper}
~~1797~~-twopence-^{part}~~upper-~~ "cartwheel" two (2)
ounces of weight-the second issue of ^{copper coinage}~~the twopence~~
~~series~~ Conrad H. Kuchler had this all to himself
to design and engrave. A man by the name of
Boulton--the Soho mint---(James Watts' steam
power, remember my mentioning him previously?)
all got into the scene of things. The coin shortage
was over! Well, almost.

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TENTH: -1787 - shilling-silver (without hearts)-
another of the 'rather poor design' coins
which has my same 'no comment' remark-
Lewis Pingo has the designing and engraving
honors.

ELEVENTH: -1818-shilling-silver.The 'half crown' of this
date is called the, "Bull Head". This coin
is similarly designed. Personally, I have
always wanted to say "Bull Neck" instead. As
a matter of fact, you might hear me say, "Bull
Neck" inspite of my supposedly knowing better.
This was the last issue of the shilling series.
Pistrucci got into the scene of things. He
designed the obverse. T. Wyon, Jr. engraved
the obverse; also, designed and engraved the
reverse.

TWELFTH: -Let us take a fast look and a last thought of
the coinage by scanning quickly the reverses

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of a 1771 and an 1806 half penny. His Majesty George III changed over the years, though we are not looking at him. Britannia changed quite a bit also, ---the sprig or spray of leaves in her right ^{hand}~~arm~~ grew to be almost a branch---the left arm once was raised holding a spear. Now, on the latter coin she has her left arm laying to her side supporting a trident leaning against the bicep of her arm. She is now seated on a rock, surrounded by the sea with a ship in full sail. Regardless of how she may change over the years to come--- may it always be for the better.

MY FIRST "PRAISE AND THANKS" BELONG TO THE "ALMIGHTY".
HE WHO HAS GRANTED ME SO MUCH FOR THE LITTLE I HAVE
GIVEN HIM.

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The fellow who once showed me an interesting (a 'spade' guinea) coin.
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and support of ideals.

May this project grow.

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South African Numismatic Society Magazine

For H. F. W. S.
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of insanity, but recovered in March, 1789. A very bitter political struggle ensued at this time over the regency.

Pitt (the younger) was minister and Pitt supported George III. The rightful regent, the Prince of Wales, later George IV, who was at continuous odds with his father, supported Pitt's opposition. George III was not only plagued by other occurrences of madness in 1801, 1804 and 1810; *but also, blindness from 1808.* George III was spared a fourth war (The War of 1812) because of his permanent insanity which started in 1811. His death on January 29, 1820 was the end of a reign of 59 years, 3 months and 4 days.

"THE COINAGE OF KING GEORGE III"

The title, in its simplest implications, covers forty-nine (49) issues of coins. Do not be fooled into thinking that this is all there is to the story. I am certain someone, somewhere, or even many persons from many places, can or will refute the number of issues.

One certainty, numismatically speaking, the reign of this monarch brought about probably more changes of faces (portraits); also of designs than any other reign. Another certainty, the long reign of George III was very distinguishing numismatically in that this period of time marked the end of the old type of copper coinage. The arts, during a transitional period, usually suffer in one phase or another, but conversely gain in other phases. The transition was not completed until the following reign. Rather poor design is evident in the latter copper coins, the spade guinea and the 1787 silver issues. Workmanship, mechanical and size regularities were the gains.

Some interesting sidelights pertaining to English coinage prior to the reign of George III are as follows:

There had been debasements of coinage.

In 1649 an order had been given for the inscriptions on the coinage

to be in the English tongue.

The farthing as a round coin was first made in the thirteenth (13th) century.

"Maundy Money" as a term is applicable during and after the reign of George II.

Coin shortages have been a part of our rather recent news. Lo, and behold! England during George III's reign had coin shortages. Wars create needs for more monies. Population movement during the latter half of the eighteenth (18th) century from the countryside to the cities created a greater need for more coinage. High cost of copper and a near exhausted supply of silver made the minting of coins nearly impossible. (If a particular era was not known as in this case, wouldn't you almost think I was talking about our own recent coin shambles!) Movement of gold overseas was very risky, because of the Napoleonic War; thus, in 1799 the Royal Mint stopped issuing the gold coinage known as guineas. Consider the screw press which was manually operated, and capable of only twenty (20) or so coins a minute production. When I take all of the factors into account, it seems very remarkable that any coins of this reign are available.

During my investigating information for this, "The Coinage of King George III"-----I was astounded by the items of numismatic interest other than the coinage itself. Just to mention a few things which come to mind are:

counterfeiting

private token coinages

store cards

medallions

Medals of Lord Nelson

Colonial Coinages

Hanoverian Thalers

Ireland

Isle of Man

India (Ceylon)

British Guinea

Bermuda

counterstamps

comparable numismatics

There are so many interesting side issues of numismatic importance pertaining to this reign that I almost feel the title to be in error. The 'trade tokens'---'provincial coins'---were mostly

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of copper and in the denomination of farthings and half pennies; however, there were some ^{token coinage} struck in silver and gold. These 'tokens or coins' did not bear the portraiture of His Majesty George III. Tradesmen, merchants, manufacturers, mechanics generally had their own portraits on the 'trade tokens'. Events of historical value were usually on the 'provincial coins'. Though these issues were not legal coinage the government gave an unofficial approving nod to their usage. After all, remember, there was a coin shortage!

More important that I should bring this up at this time is another matter. From approximately 1787 to 1796 there was a 'national pastime' of collecting of tokens. The height of the frenzy was reached toward the end of 1794. Some of the scarce issues doubled, tripled or even become higher priced. Does this have a familiar ring to it? The important part of this collecting frenzy is the preservation of some of the colonial tokens and early issues of United States coinage. These being some of items, which some of these 'frenzied collectors' turned-to in collecting 'after the storm'.

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Some of the names and things which 'crop-up' in this jaunt through the "Coinage of King George III" are almost staggering and truly amazing. After a look over these names and things, then, we can see how like the 'jigsaw puzzle' they all have a definite place in the evolution of the times. Names? Oh yes, James Watt, Robert Fulton, Stephenson, James Hargreaves--- yes--that 'apple guy' Newton. Things! Well, there's coal, iron, blast furnace, spinning jenny, steam engine---yes-- the Industrial Revolution.

To endeavor to cover the previously mentioned forty-nine (49) issues and/or the many other types or kinds of pieces struck during this reign would be an impossibility for any one sitting. We should, however, see a sufficient number of coins, tokens, etc., to have a bit of an idea of what I have been trying to put across.

FIRST: What else--the 1791 'spade' guinea.

- The 'spade' guinea was struck from 1787-1799.

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It was the fifth (5th) issue of the guinea series. Previously I had mentioned it to be of 'rather poor design'. Further study on my part will be required before I can ever truly be able to fully agree or disagree. After all! Shouldn't I be partial? Lewis Pingo had this coin all to himself. By that I mean, he was both the designer and engraver of both the obverse and reverse.

SECOND: -A 1788 one-half (1/2) 'spade' guinea. These were struck from 1787 to 1800- same designer and engraver.

Both of the foregoing were not struck during all of the years mentioned inclusively---but---most of them. The guinea became a part of English coinage during the reign of Charles II, and ended with the reign of George III. The guinea was replaced by the pound gold piece (sovereign). The guinea was a gold coin, 21 shillings in value.

THIRD: - A 1779 guinea, the fourth (4th) issue of the guinea series which were struck from 1774 to 1786; except, 1781.

Thomas Pingo designed the obverse, engraved the ob-

verse and reverse. Tanner designed the reverse.

FOURTH:

- A store card- copy of a 'spade' guinea - brass-
obverse George III--reverse: Parkins and Gotto-
London. When I ran across this one--I did a
flip.

FIFTH

-1774 Farthing-copper- first issue of the farthing
series which were struck from 1771 thru 1775.

I have read of Tanner and of Thomas Pingo being
the designers and/or engravers of this coin.

Please, I'm not ready for this controversy!!!!

SIXTH:

-1778 Half Penny-copper-Forgery. Something
other than official coinage of Great Britain;
afterall, no half pennies were struck from 1776
until 1797.

SEVENTH:

-1792 - Half Penny - Trade Token-obverse
John Wilkinson-Iron Master reverse Vulcan.

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EIGHTH:

¹⁷⁹⁹
~~1792~~ Farthing-copper--We are back on genuine
coinage again! Note here of the date being
under the bust of His Majesty; also, this was
the first English coin to have the denomination
(value) as a part of the lettering. This is the
third issue of the farthing series. C. Kuchler
(mitt der dots above the 'u') designed and en-
graved both sides of the coin. This is one of the
coins which fall under the 'rather poor design'
statement and again, I am not about to
agree or disagree at this time.

NINTH:

^{- copper -}
~~1797~~ ^{part of} twopence ^{copper coinage} ~~upper~~ - "cartwheel" two (2)
ounces of weight ~~the second issue of the twopence~~
~~series~~. Conrad H. Kuchler had this all to himself
to design and engrave. A man by the name of
Boulton--the Soho mint---(James Watts' steam
power, remember my mentioning him previously?)
all got into the scene of things. The coin shortage
was over! Well, almost.

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TENTH: -1787 - shilling-silver (without hearts)-
another of the 'rather poor design' coins
which has my same 'no comment' remark-
Lewis Pingo has the designing and engraving
honors.

ELEVENTH: -1818-shilling-silver.The 'half crown' of this
date is called the, "Bull Head". This coin
is similarly designed. Personally, I have
always wanted to say "Bull Neck" instead. As
a matter of fact, you might hear me say, "Bull
Neck" inspite of my supposedly knowing better.
This was the last issue of the shilling series.
Pistrucci got into the scene of things. He
designed the obverse. T. Wyon, Jr. engraved
the obverse; also, designed and engraved the
reverse.

TWELFTH: -Let us take a fast look and a last thought of
the coinage by scanning quickly the reverses

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of a 1771 and an 1806 half penny. His Majesty George III changed over the years, though we are not looking at him, Britannia changed quite a bit also, ---the sprig or spray of leaves in her right ^{hand} ~~arm~~ grew to be almost a branch---the left arm once was raised holding a spear. Now, on the latter coin she has her left arm laying to her side supporting a trident leaning against the bicep of her arm. She is now seated on a rock, surrounded by the sea with a ship in full sail. Regardless of how she may change over the years to come--- may it always be for the better.

MY FIRST "PRAISE AND THANKS" BELONG TO THE "ALMIGHTY".
HE WHO HAS GRANTED ME SO MUCH FOR THE LITTLE I HAVE
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May this project grow.

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